



# CONGRESSMAN HENRY A. WAXMAN NEWS

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CAPITOL SPOTLIGHT  
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## "SOVIET ANTI-ZIONIST COMMITTEE"

The most frightening aspect of my recent visit to the Soviet Union was the Jewish reaction to the new Anti-Zionist Committee. This Committee is composed entirely of Soviet Jews willing to play a key role in government propaganda on such government issues as the Middle East and Soviet Jewish emigration. All of these Jews are subject to subtle and not so subtle coercion because they enjoy (and can lose) positions of prestige and privilege.

We in the West must be very cautious about judging Jews who participate in this Committee. True, some of them may be unprincipled scoundrels willing to say or do anything in exchange for a larger apartment or a dacha in the country. Others may be nothing more or less than fragile human beings--fearful of their future or their children's future should they refuse to cooperate. The Talmud warns us never to judge a person until we have been in his place.

The older refusniks with whom I met in Moscow and Leningrad are terrified of the Anti-Zionist Committee. They remember vividly that Stalin formed committees of Jewish "spokesmen" all over the U.S.S.R. These committees collected information about Jews in their locality and passed this information along to the N.K.V.D. (secret police). The committees also issued numerous well-publicized "statements".

The "statements" of the new Anti-Zionist Committee are being awaited with fear and trembling. During the Stalin era similar committees routinely announced that Jews were unpatriotic, that they were spies for the United States, that they were masters of a propaganda machine subverting Soviet values and misleading their young.

The Soviet Jews we met feel very strongly that the traditional anti-Semitism which marked Russian society for centuries has not died. They contend that among the masses of Soviet citizens there is still some of the hatred of the "zhid" which fueled so many pogroms through the ages. Stalin was able to ignite this kindling with his Jewish committees. They fear the current regime intends to do the same.

How desperately I wish I could have assuaged their fears! I wanted to tell terrified Jews that they were over-reacting--showing the paranoia so common among persecuted people. Unfortunately, I could

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not honestly give them any reassurance.

One of the first acts of the new Anti-Zionist Committee was to provide a Jewish apologia for the virtual end to emigration by Soviet Jews. Ignoring the long lists of families hoping for reunification, ignoring the thousands of unanswered petitions for exit visas, the Anti-Zionist Committee simply echoed the official doctrine that "no more Jews wish to leave".

Even more outrageous was the solemn declaration by the Anti-Zionist Committee that Soviet Jews were traitors who promoted Nazism during the Second World War!!!

I have joined with numerous other members of Congress in writing a strongly worded letter to President Yuri V. Andropov. A mere letter will not alter Soviet conduct. We in Congress intend to monitor the Anti-Zionist Committee very closely. We especially are determined to learn if additional committees are being formed and what kind of activities are being undertaken both in Moscow and throughout the country. Soviet leaders must know that U.S.-Soviet relations can never be divorced from human rights in the U.S.S.R. The U.S.S.R. simply cannot launch an anti-Semitic crusade and simultaneously obtain advantages from their relationship with the United States.

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